

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 618

By Finney R.

A RESOLUTION to commend the members of the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club for honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club are such estimable people who evince the greatest integrity and probity in all their chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, the celebration of their sixtieth anniversary gives club members a chance to reflect on their many past achievements while looking toward the future with confidence and pride; and

WHEREAS, in November of 1947, the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club was founded, marking the beginning of many productive years of amateur radio service in Blount County and the cities of Maryville and Alcoa; and

WHEREAS, nine radio operators comprised the club in its earliest days, which is a far cry from the organization's seventy-eight members today; the first President of the club now serves as President Emeritus; and

WHEREAS, the club holds amateur radio training classes, as amateur radio operators must be licensed by the Federal Communication Commission and must pass a written test to become an amateur radio operator; and

WHEREAS, every year, club members participate in a communications event in which clubs from all over the United States and Canada use their own radio equipment to set up an amateur radio operation for twenty-four hours; all participants must use generator or battery power to simulate an emergency condition; and

WHEREAS, amateur radio operators are part of the Citizens Corps, which is a valuable asset of the federal government's Homeland Security Department, as they are called upon to provide backup communication in the case of an emergency condition; and

WHEREAS, the Smoky Mountain crew has experienced their fair share of emergency situations and ably rose to the challenge on each occasion; and

WHEREAS, during the blizzard of 1993, the club set up a VHF base station on the two meter ham band at the Red Cross Center in Blount County, while hams in four-wheel drive vehicles acted as mobile stations and rescued residents stranded without power, heat, or food; and

WHEREAS, the motto of the amateur radio service, "When all else fails, Amateur Radio," was never felt more strongly than during and after Hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, amateur radio operators from across the country went to the states most severely damaged by the hurricane, established communications at Red Cross stations, and provided emergency communications for the local emergency operations; this entire operation was carried out at the amateur radio operators' own expenses; and

WHEREAS, when cell telephones are down, electrical power lost, and police and fire communications not available, amateur radio operators stand ready to help fill the void; and

WHEREAS, the remarkable success and longevity enjoyed by the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club is directly attributable to its members' reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and their uncommon ability to serve their communities during times of distress; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club epitomize the ideal of consummate professionals, dedicated public servants, and reliable friends and neighbors; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio Club are wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and they should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby commend the members of the Smoky Mountain Amateur Radio

Club for sixty years of honorable and astute service and salute their unswerving commitment to promoting and maintaining the safety and welfare of the good people of Blount County and the cities of Maryville and Alcoa.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.